Challenges of School Reform – Becoming An Agent of School Reform

Chapter Three

Chapter Outline

I. Historical Systemic Reform Ideas (Handout, examples)
   - 1892 - Committee of Ten
   - 1918 - Seven Cardinal Principles
   - 1957 - Sputnik & Golden Age of Science/Math Reform
   - 1982 - Paideia Proposal
   - 1983 - A Place Called School
   - 1983 - Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching
   - 1983 - A Nation At Risk
   - 1984 – Horace’s Compromise
   - 1986 - A Nation Prepared & Holmes Report
   - 1994 - Goals 2000
   - 2001 - No Child Left Behind Act

Five Observations and Comments on Previous School Reforms

- The general public (e.g., parent groups, community leaders, state and federal lawmakers) consistently views the main purpose for schools to be the solving of perceived needs in society.
- Historically, the most influential groups advocating school reform are lawmakers and national leaders, yet most communities feel strongly about local control through locally elected school boards.
- The public is most often NOT interested in enhancing individual goal achievement; the public is paying attention in group effects. The public favors a one-size-fits-all approach to education and views students as “products” to be molded.
- Most reforms are shaped by forces and persons outside the school systems, not by the schools and the teachers themselves.
- School teachers have been viewed traditionally as public servants or skilled workers (not individual professionals). Like their students, the public believes teachers are best prepared (trained) in a one-size-fits-all approach.
II. Current Systemic Reform Ideas

- Outcome Goals
  1. Identify high quality learning outcomes in all subjects (NCTM etc)
  2. School Report Cards

- Redesigned Professional Teacher Training Reforms
  1. Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) common standards for all initial teacher training programs
  2. Raising the bar – Praxis II and III testing required by most states
  3. Institutional NCATE accreditation tied to candidate pass rate
  4. National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

- Current and Redesigned Teacher-Compensation Schemes
  1. Current – courses taken and years of experience
  2. Suggested - pay based on meeting Professional Growth Benchmarks
  3. Suggested - Merit Pay – could be based on a) student performance; b) teacher performance; c) individualized productivity plan; d) teaching assignment – difficulty or in demand

- School Choice
  1. Voucher Plans
  2. Charter Schools
  3. Open-Enrollment Plans
  4. Magnet Schools

- Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Programs
  1. School-Business Partnership Programs
  2. Full-Service Schools